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ABSTRACT

This book is the product of collaboration between Education and Social Work, at both the national and local level, on a project to identify and disseminate examples of good practice in the provision for children and young people presenting social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties. There are many issues which surround the setting up and management of effective provision for these children and young people. This book concentrates on five such issues: (1) policy; (2) inter-agency collaboration; (3) identification and assessment; (4) learning and teaching; and (5) staff development. The intent is to identify that elusive phenomenon, "good practice." In doing so, the contributors have drawn on a range of sources: their own substantial experience of dealing with the issues; their knowledge of the ways these issues are being addressed in Scotland and elsewhere; and research findings on effective policy and practice. The chapters include: (1) "Policy Frameworks and Policy Planning" (Jenni Barr); (2) "Inter-agency Approaches" (Bob McKay); (3) "Identification and Assessment" (Russell Forrest); (4) "Learning and Teaching" (Brenda Frier); (5) "Staff Development" (Alan McLean); (6) "Where Next?" Contains a 15-item bibliography for further reading and a list of contributors. (BF)

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Schooling with care?

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Developing provision for children and young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

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Schooling with care?

Developing provision for children and young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

Edited by Pamela Munn

A project funded by the Scottish Office

If children and young people have negative feelings about themselves, and their close contacts, then some respond by even more negative actions. It is vital to try to break the cycle.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, MP
Minister for Education at The Scottish Office

The project was funded with financial support from the Scottish Office Education Department and the Social Work Services Inspectorate.

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Contents

Foreword
Pamela Munn (iv)

Policy frameworks and policy planning
Jenni Barr 1

Inter-agency approaches
Bob McKay 5

Identification and assessment
Russell Forrest 9

Learning and teaching
Brenda Frier 14

Staff development
Alan McLean 18

Where next? 22

Further reading 23

The contributors 24

Foreword

This book is the product of collaboration between Education and Social Work at both national and local level on a project to identify and disseminate examples of good practice in the provision for children and young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

There are many issues which surround the setting up and management of effective provision for these children and young people. All are of national importance. This book concentrates on five such issues: policy, inter-agency collaboration, identification and assessment, learning and teaching and staff development. In writing about these issues, the authors' intention is to identify that elusive phenomenon, 'good practice'. In doing so, they have drawn on a range of sources: their own substantial experience of dealing with the issues, their knowledge of the ways these issues are being addressed in Scotland and elsewhere and research findings on effective policy and practice.

In many ways we have never before had such a clear consensus emerging from published documents on the rights and entitlements of pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties to appropriate education and care. The principle of child-centred inter-agency collaboration is firmly established in the White Paper *Scotland's Children* — and documents from *Choosing with Care* to *Another Kind of Home* argue for an approach to provision which seeks to maintain children at home and in their local schools, wherever possible. Such an approach implies a range of support available at local level and early identification and assessment of children's needs.

Consensus on paper does not necessarily imply consensus among professionals concerned with provision. Yet at a major national conference on policy, planning and strategic development, held in December 1993, a remarkable level of agreement was evident. Those from education and social work departments and those involved in work with children's panels were able to identify common concerns. The authors have been able to draw on that conference in describing what counts as good practice and in identifying priorities for the future. Key among these priorities are:

- putting recommendations from recent reports into clear national guidelines, spelling out children's entitlements;
- the dissemination of examples of good practice within local authorities and among authorities;
- the promotion of inter-agency approaches in pre-service and in-service training, in practice as well as theory through joint training sessions;
- the development of local multi-agency networks to enable good ideas to be exchanged;
- the encouragement of pilot projects to promote innovative learning and teaching approaches.

In considering effective provision for young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, it is important to listen to what the young people themselves have to say. A powerful contribution was made to the conference by two young people who had been in care, describing their experience and the impact on their schooling. We have included some comments from young people in care throughout the text.

Our hope is that this publication will raise awareness about what counts as good practice in providing for these young people and will encourage debate about which aspects of provision exemplify good practice. The ideas about good practice are challenging and it is no easy task to translate high-sounding principles into day-to-day working practices. Yet young people in our care deserve nothing less.

Pamela Munn

The conference in December 1993 was organised by the Scottish Council for Research in Education. The keynote address to the conference by Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, Minister for Education, has been published separately (see Further reading).

The quotes from pupils are reproduced with kind permission from: *Not Just a Name: The views of young people in foster and residential care*. Written and published by the National Consumer Council and Who Cares? Trust, 1993.

Policy frameworks and policy planning

Jenni Barr

Policy is important in making explicit the aims and principles of provision for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and in debates about resource allocations. No policy can exist on paper alone, however clear the principles it embraces or however strong the political will that it should succeed. How the policy operates in reality is the key.

The first section of this paper examines the distinctive place and key features of authority policy in creating and supporting good practice when providing education and care for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The second section considers the implications of single tier arrangements for policy development and argues that a national lead is required to safeguard the rights and entitlements of Scotland's children to appropriate education and care.

Features of an effective policy

The test of any effective policy is its implementation in practice; the test of an effective local authority policy is the extent to which it can succeed in supporting, clarifying and changing practice throughout the authority. A written policy needs to be sufficiently flexible to foster and in time endorse innovations and developments arising at the local level which are consistent with its aims. But by the same token, it needs sufficient teeth to be able to discourage and ultimately to block examples of practice which fly in the face of the very principles on which the policy is founded.

Evaluating the effectiveness of such a policy requires clearly expressed aims, worked out at each level from the macro to the micro, tailored to the agencies and institutions involved. Procedures and structures for implementation will be strong indicators that a policy is being worked out in practice, but only indicators of performance, together with prespecified criteria, will be able to demonstrate those ways in which the policy is having effect.

Effective policy planning

A local authority devising policy in this area will have as its target an effective strategy for assisting children and young people.

Crucial aspects of such a strategy are that it is authority-wide and crosses departmental boundaries and disciplines; is explicit and clearly articulated; is owned by the local council; is implemented via multi-agency groups set up at various levels throughout the authority; includes within it a structure of underpinning by a network of provision and resources; and promotes the sharing of data across agencies. The aims of such a policy need to be stated clearly and in such a way as to render them accessible for regular monitoring and evaluation, and for effective allocation, even gatekeeping, of resources.

Clearly, the principles which underpin effective policy planning in the area of social and emotional difficulties are those same principles which underpin all good policy development. Let us consider individual aspects in greater detail.

Clarity

- *The policy should be explicit and clearly stated.*

A policy is more than just a statement of principles and intent. It is also the mechanisms (even the detail of the mechanisms) that are set up to convert these principles into practice.

But the starting point is the statement of principles. These should be stated clearly and boldly, honed to a minimum for the sake of impact and clarity. Values should be made explicit. In this way they become accessible to a range of professional

groups, facilitating the adoption of shared objectives. Just as important, they become accessible to families and to the young people themselves.

If constructed with care, agreed key principles may underpin several interrelating policies within an authority and assist in creating an overall coherence of approach. Thus, they may appear in an authority's social strategy, in policies for child care, in a strategy for young people, and in policy relating to meeting special educational needs. They may ultimately be expressed in the form of a Young Person's Charter, or a Statement of Rights.

A single key principle may also influence several strategies for provision. For example, adopting a principle of seeking to intervene in a manner least intrusive in order to provide appropriate education and care (clearly established in the entitlement philosophy spelled out in the literature) can have the following implications:

- voluntary measures are tried before compulsory measures are sought, and compulsory measures used only for the minimum period of time necessary to achieve their aim;
- agencies work together to seek to keep children at home and in their communities as far as it proves possible to do so;
- flexible and local day education provision is available for young people who are experiencing difficulty in the mainstream but who are able to live in the community;
- young people are only placed in off-site educational provision if they are not able to be supported within a mainstream setting;
- where it is difficult or damaging for a young person to remain at home, a first step is to consider use of an alternative family setting;
- residential care is only used when it has been shown that family care is not able to meet the needs of the young person.

> *"Most of my school life was made a misery because I was in care. I was treated like an outsider by most of the teachers."*
>
> (16 year old)

Ownership

- *The policy should be 'owned' by the authority and implemented via multi-agency groups established at various levels within the authority.*

It is not enough that an authority adopt and 'own' the policy statements in principle. Much of the success of the policy will depend on the extent to which separate services (for example, education and social work) can adopt an integrated approach, and negotiate separate contributions within an agreed framework of shared objectives. This needs clear recognition and support, both politically and administratively, for instance through a joint authority committee, charged with coordinating and overseeing the policy implementation. Here structures and procedures for joint funding, for access to resources, and for collecting and pooling data can be developed and maintained. Here, too, the effects of other authority policies can be monitored for their impact and contribution. To take a current example, in more than one region in Scotland developments in thinking on child care or youth strategy have led to revisions of the education services' exclusion procedures.

An effective structure for corporate planning at authority level, then, provides the backbone for multi-agency working throughout the various layers of the authority. With multidisciplinary groups at area or district level there are two prerequisites for success: service representatives need to cover the same administrative areas (this requires a degree of central coordination given the sectoring that occurs within services), and they need to be of comparable status, each speaking on behalf of their service with an equivalent level of authority. In practice, some councils encourage and support the work of inter–agency school liaison groups. Established multidisciplinary groups within children's homes and other institutions are, however, less common.

Resources

- *The policy should be supported by a network of provision and resources, with arrangements for joint assessment, joint access and joint funding.*

Resource issues are critical, for it is here that we see the policy in practice. An example will illustrate. In one Scottish authority where policy statements asserted the importance of joint assessment and use of community-based resources, it was found that many primary age children were still being placed outwith the authority in residential schools on the action of one department alone. The response by elected members demonstrates some of the steps for effective policy implementation. First, they reasserted their commitment to the principles outlined in the strategy and the priority given to the strategy by the authority; then they set up a gatekeeping function over access to residential placements, requiring joint assessment and specifying the criteria for any consideration of a residential option. Along with procedures for joint decision-making went a mechanism for joint funding, ring-fenced out of education and social work budgets. Specific mechanisms to effect such control may vary from authority to authority, but the message is the same — the practice of professionals can be held accountable to the policy.

> *"You are always getting shifted around from home to home and you feel depressed all the time."*
>
> (15 year old)

Professionals accountable to the policy, and the policy accountable to the needs of young people are important aspects against which policy effectiveness can be evaluated. Councils active in developing their policy for young people have become involved in building up the range of local resources. Here the emphasis is on the availability and flexibility of support. This can range from establishing preventative programmes (alternatives to care) and increasing the number of respite, foster and community care placements, to increasing the flexibility and range of in-school supports, and creating more tutorial and small group day education places. With good networking and shared aims, one benefit is a build-up in local resourcefulness — an increase in the skills, expertise and experiences of success for those working most directly with troubled young people, including their families and mainstream schools.

Monitoring and evaluation

- *The aims of the policy should be stated clearly to allow ongoing monitoring and evaluation.*

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of policy, its aims need to be made explicit, criteria set for success, and performance outcomes monitored and evaluated against outcome expectations. If the policy statement has been full and clear then a framework will already be available for use in development plans in individual services and schools. By the same token, quality assurance procedures at the local level can powerfully inform an authority's overview and review.

The information collected and analysed by such procedures needs to be helpful to all concerned. This seems self-evident. Yet data which could be used comparatively for monitoring purposes are often not collected in such a way as to be accessible. Frequently there is duplication of effort or variation in measure. For example, in one authority an index of deprivation was drawn up as part of the authority's social strategy, at the same time as a separate but similar index was being constructed for allocating educational psychologists' time to schools.

The ultimate test of an effective policy is whether or not is has teeth. If the policy is failing to deliver, or if procedures set down in the policy are being bypassed, does the authority know? More importantly, can it act to keep the policy on target?

Here we come full circle. A policy which delivers, comprises a clear statement of intent, including explicit statements of the values on which it is based and of desired outcomes. To evaluate its effectiveness, it needs data about these outcomes and information about the process by which they have been achieved. But the policy is more than the written statement. It is the mechanisms by which the written

statement is translated into practice, that is, the actual structures and procedures for implementation. 'If you know you've got quality assurance, you've got quality.' Similarly, if you have procedures that are successful in making a child-centred policy work, then you have an effective policy.

Where now?

Many authorities in Scotland are enthusiastic and committed to working more effectively in this area, and already they have considerable experience on which to draw in identifying the next steps to be addressed in refining policy. Agendas for action identified by inter-agency teams at the December conference (see the Foreword to this book) included:

- empowering authority strategy groups, and seeking specific backing from joint member groups;
- establishing common budgets and interdisciplinary training opportunities;
- targeting resources at projects in agreed areas of special need;
- reviewing both guidelines and policy on school exclusions, and exploring contractual relationships between agencies (for example, on an issue such as truancy);
- tying resources to outcome in seeking to reward resourcefulness in local provision;
- gathering accurate comparative data across services.

But the warnings are clear. Pressures on local authorities at the present time are immense. Without clear national safeguards, stability of policy and resourcing for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties will be fragile. In the move to single tier local government, authorities should ensure that there is a continuation and development of established inter-agency collaboration and of existing good practice.

There is much at stake. I have argued that effective practice at the local level is empowered and supported by a clear policy statement at regional level, and by established mechanisms for implementation. Let me draw a parallel argument at national level, using three recommendations from the national conference.

- A national lead is required, putting the recommendations from recent reports into a clear legislative framework which spells out the rights and entitlement of Scotland's children to appropriate education and care. The framework should make explicit the values on which this thinking is based, and offer specific guidance to authorities for establishing and maintaining a policy for young people, including those who have special needs or who are at risk.
- A national focus for inter-agency collaboration (including collaboration across departments at the Scottish Office) would support the networking and interchange of experiences and ideas across authorities.
- Finance for a nationally coordinated series of pilots would enable initiatives in agreed target areas to be explored, evaluated and the lessons shared.

If there is uncertainty at the present time as familiar regions are dissolved and new authorities are established, there is also opportunity. A strong lead nationally, including clear policy statements backed by resources and the establishment of mechanisms for supporting effective local initiatives, piloting new initiatives, evaluation and disseminating good practice would give the impetus to protect good local developments, where these already exist, and to support and foster others where they are still required.

Inter-agency approaches

Bob McKay

The nature and resolution of issues arising from the needs of young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is a complex subject. A major issue relates to the variety of statutory responsibilities of different sectors, for example, education, social work, the police, the Reporter's department and children's hearings. Satisfactory resolution will also involve parents, carers and communities. Other potential partners may include residential schools, voluntary organisations and specialist and voluntary projects.

No single body or interest can be expected to resolve the issues which can arise. It is, therefore, essential that all potential partners are committed to working together throughout the processes of supporting young people. These processes range from early identification, assessment and intervention to remedial action, placement in care and, at the end of the continuum of provision, possible residential placement. This paper identifies the key participants in inter-agency work, suggests the main barriers to effective joint approaches and ends by proposing ways of overcoming these barriers.

The key participants

The following key agencies and bodies may be involved in any supportive system addressing the whole area of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties:

- young people;
- parents;
- communities;
- education (including schools and youth and educational support services together with the educational psychology service);
- the social work department;
- the Reporter's department and members of the children's hearings;
- the police;
- voluntary organisations and projects dedicated to this particular area of work.

It is easier to identify the agencies potentially involved in providing effective support for young people than to ensure that these agencies work together to maximum effect. Quality joint working, therefore, is both the challenge and the requirement.

Barriers to inter-agency work

There is a growing consensus that inter-agency work is vital in addressing the complex and often long-term needs arising from social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is also recognised that barriers to cooperation continue to exist. The origin of these barriers may be statutory, structural, philosophic, attitudinal and managerial. Other key constraints will intrude and these will include both time and resources.

It is worthy of note that different departments may have different loci or responsibilities. For example, education departments are expected to deliver a service for *all* young people of school age whilst social work departments will deal with particular groups and cohorts within that age group. There are also practical factors which can hinder inter-agency work. These will include the differing responsibilities and perceptions of professional staff and the individual expectations and aspirations of parents and/or young people. An obvious example is the challenge which faces the teacher where a young person is offering challenging behaviour which is creating difficulties within the classroom. The teacher may well share a sense of concern with professionals from other disciplines in seeking to support that young person. The same teacher, however, is also faced with the expectations of other pupils and their parents and carers. The classroom teacher, therefore, and ultimately the headteacher, are faced with com-

peting concerns. In such cases the collective welfare of the class as a whole will have to be balanced with the individual welfare of a particular pupil. Quite properly a social worker will be predominantly concerned with supporting the individual young person and in his/her concentrated and focused attempts to support that young person, may believe that the teacher or the school is being unresponsive or inflexible. Joint working will not remove these constraints and concerns but will provide a forum for constructive professional discussion and consideration.

The following key barriers to the effective promotion of inter-agency working have been identified:

- There is no single corporate statutory framework within which the needs of young people can be addressed as a coherent whole and whereby the approach and responsibilities of various departments are required to elide and interrelate.
- At a national level there are no guidelines to promote such a coherent corporate strategy. It should be noted, however, that the presence of national guidelines would not equal or guarantee provision since this will be dependent on additional factors, for example resourcing.

> *"I don't always get my homework done due to pressure from home, then I get into trouble at school and it just makes everything worse."*
>
> (15 year old)

- The corporate responsibility and 'ownership' by local authorities, within which a number of services will be involved, may have gaps in provision. The corporate 'ownership' of the young person is bound up with different statutory responsibilities involving services within the same authority.
- There is very often a theoretical/philosophic divide among services. Different services from their statutory responsibilities, training and experience may take different approaches to young people and their families based on departmental or professional assumptions or convictions.
- At all levels of decision-making the various parties, such as departments, parents and other agencies, may have significantly different expectations of the desired outcome. A department, therefore, may well have achieved what it considers to be the best possible outcome, while a parent would remain dissatisfied.
- Inter-departmental competition, rivalry and pressures, including those of time and resources, could hinder effective development. Separate resourcing and devolved school management may exacerbate this problem.
- Different departments and agencies may have different planning stages and different models for intervention, action and progress. In addition to causing difficulties for the professionals involved, this can also create bar-riers for parents and young people.
- Different department-al structures, managerial models and perceptions of status can cause unnecessary professional conflict.
- The reinforcing of pre-service assumptions and experience of staff can create barriers. One obvious example would be the perceived separate and different roles of teachers and social workers in working with young people.

There is also the possibility that even where attitudes coincide the departmental structures may inadvertently reinforce stereotyping of other professionals.

- The size of unit at both local and authority levels can lead to communication difficulties.
- Compartmentalised information dissemination systems can cause confusion and misinformation.

Key common principles to support inter-agency work

If effective inter-agency work is to be developed, promoted and supported then it is essential that key principles be identified which will underpin such work. It is important to note that, in identifying these key principles it is not intended that various partners be interchangeable. Rather it is to be emphasised that the total interests and the best interests of the young person should be the common agenda to which all contribute.

The following key principles and/or practices should inform an inter-agency model:

- An approach centred on young people. If this principle is to be something more than rhetoric it will be reflected in models and practices which focus on the needs of the young person together with a willingness to have a flexibility that can accommodate these needs.
- A shared value base and system. If departments and agencies together with parents and young people are to work together towards a common agenda then it is essential that there is explicit clarification as to the principles and values which underpin the joint work.
- A commitment both in policy and in practice to joint team working and joint development planning and to shared accountability.
- Where applicable and appropriate, shared resource input.
- An agreed common legal framework and/or agreed common guidelines.
- A commitment by all concerned to a view of children and young people which emphasises entitlement rather than a deficit model locating blame in the individual.
- Definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities. This is essential if the effective interrelationships of tasks are to be achieved.
- A joint commitment to the minimum disruption to children's and young people's lives.
- The promotion of mutual trust and respect married to flexibility.
- A commitment to an early assessment and identification model (both preventative and holistic).
- An agreement by all concerned to a framework of practice predicated on the continuum of needs and on the concept of entitlement.

> *"Teachers are more understanding now. They know from professionals I do have real problems."*
>
> (16 year old)

In order to enact such principles and practice it is essential that a model of working is identifiable at all levels (for example, local authority committees, senior management, middle management and first line staff). It is also essential that the promotion of such a framework is supported not only by policy statements but also by effective monitoring, evaluation and revision. The need for a commitment of time and resources to effective staff development both within departments and inter–departmentally is a fundamental prerequisite.

One option available to all authorities would be to identify good practice (conforming to the principles outlined above) and to ensure the dissemination of such examples. This would show a support for the principles of a policy whilst at the same time demonstrating that it can be addressed and achieved at a practical level. Such examples of good practice may exist within an authority or may be evident in other authorities.

Training and staff development

There are clearly key issues relating to training and staff development. They are considered in greater detail by Alan McLean in his contibution to this publication. These issues are important. Unless they are attended to, inter-agency collaboration will have little chance of success.

I would highlight the following:

- It is essential that, in pre-service training for all staff, for example, teachers, community education staff and social work staff, the principles and values of inter-agency work are made explicit and, wherever possible, there is the opportunity in pre-service training for students to share part of their training experience with other professions.
- The key departments should ensure that the inter-agency dimension is incorporated as appropriate within their own departmental staff development and training opportunities.
- Wherever possible and appropriate opportunities should be developed for integrated in-service and staff development which might reinforce the principles and concepts of policy whilst at the same time identifying, demonstrating and disseminating good practice and preferred models.
- The involvement of staff in policy development is essential in explicitly ensuring the policy ownership.

Identification and assessment

Russell Forrest

Down through the ages there has been evidence of children being abused, neglected and disapproved of by adults. The Scottish education system, perhaps to some extent unconsciously, seems, on occasions, to have institutionalised disapproval. Educational legislation can be seen as emphasising parents' rights and duties, and authorities' rights and duties and as under-representing children's rights. Children can feel in such a system more like objects than persons in their own right, citizens of the future.

A deficit model of children is no longer acceptable. We need to get closer to angry children to provide them with the necessary measures of care, protection, guidance and control which are in their best interests.

It is only relatively recently that children's contrary behaviour has been understood as sometimes being a channel of communication for emotional distress, signalling not only a need to mitigate our disapproval with humility but also to think again about the questions:

- *What is a child?*
- *What is a family?*
- *What is a school?*
- *What is a teacher?*

Assessment implies an openness to examination of these questions.

Why is identification and assessment important?

Human behaviour is complex. It is interconnected with aspects of personality, with intelligence systems, with family relationships, and is also reactive to social circumstances. Nevertheless, it is sometimes only the behavioural symptoms of children and young people that are attended to, rather than the underlying causes of particular behaviour.

We all may wish for clear-cut, preferably simple (perhaps even cost-effective) solutions to complex problems, for single causes to explain particular effects. The truth is, however, that every child is a developing person who autonomously interacts with events and with other people. The child is changed by these events and people and, in turn, changes them in a continuous reciprocal interaction. The child is indeed father of the man.

If we fail to understand the complexity of what may cause 'difficult' behaviour we may produce unhelpful labels for children, for example, 'lazy', 'disruptive' and probably also produce categories of children, for example, in earlier years, 'delinquent' or 'maladjusted'. The search for quick and easy solutions to the complex problem of difficult behaviour is mistaken.

The important distinction between these two approaches, the one acknowledging complexity and the other reducing complexity, is already implicit in the word 'assessment' itself. For an 'assessor' can be 'an inferior officer of justice' (and 'a rationer of supplies') and an assessment 'the act of determining the amount of damages'. The Latin root on the other hand provides the meaning 'to sit near or by the side of someone ... to console, to give comfort, advice and protection'. This implies a sense of 'being with' someone rather than 'doing to' someone, a sense of 'holding' to another person's experience in order to gain insight into his/her view of the world. This will mean taking time, relating with trust, and working closely with colleagues in other disciplines. Surely this is the right approach to children as growing human beings: and the use of 'objective' tests will not enable us to short circuit this essential process.

The importance of multi-disciplinary assessment

It is likely that multidisciplinary assessment will be indicated where children/young people are throwing up a combination of persistent, intensive or puzzling difficulties such as social isolation, rejection by

peers, truancy, school refusal, or, where a child/young person is not responding to a number of treatment plans or to added learning opportunities.

Records of Needs, involving multi-agency assessment, will be appropriate where children/young people have pronounced, specific or complex special educational needs which require continuing review. It will also be appropriate to arrange multidisciplinary assessment for all children who have been in care and for whom there is no realistic plan to return home and/or no clear education plans.

There are many decision making forums within which multi-agency assessment reports will be considered and be influential in the decisions which are made. These forums may include children in care reviews, adoption and fostering panels, child protection case conferences, children's hearings and schools' senior management teams. Particular care is required to distinguish between the process of making assessments and the process of making decisions in order to avoid assessors artificially limiting the range or type of recommendations for action according to whether or not preferred provisions are actually available.

Comprehensive assessment of the needs of children, young people and their families should not be totally constrained by the availability of resources. Decision makers, however, have to be accountable to committees for resource allocation, and for the identification of gaps in provision. There may, of course, be a gap between assessment and outcome, between the 'ought' and the 'is'. Practitioners, policy makers and administrators need to be in an open dynamic exchange about resource issues with 'the customers', not operating against them in a collusive closed system.

It is also important to ensure that assessments are led by needs and not by resources because there is a danger that categories of children ('delinquent'/'maladjusted') will emerge to fit categories of available placement. The White Paper *Scotland's Children* restates the principle enshrined in the Kilbrandon report of 1964 that 'every child must be treated as an individual and each situation dealt with in its unique circumstances.'

Rights and responsibilities

As indicated in *Scotland's Children*, services to children and families should be delivered 'in partnership, with parents being kept fully informed and involved in the process.' In relation to matters of child protection as defined by Lord Clyde (1992), all measures should proceed under reference to the European Convention on Human Rights and the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child .

Article 8 of the European Convention speaks of the right of families to be safeguarded from unwarranted interference by the State, unless there are serious concerns about 'morals and/or health' putting children at risk. Articles 2, 3, 5, 12, of the United Nations Convention refer to children's rights to:

- have rights available without discrimination of any kind;
- the best interest of the child being a primary consideration in all actions concerning children;
- direction and guidance from adults in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child;
- children's views being heard, considered and taken into account (in accordance with the age and maturity of the child).

Key principles of assessment

Six key principles of assessment are:

- Children, young people and their families should be actively engaged in the process of assessment from the outset. Their wishes and feelings should be taken fully into account in arriving at recommendations. Parents and children have a central role in helping to formulate the personal and social history which is a critical part of the framework of understanding required to bring sometimes diverse professional opinions together into a coherent narrative. Practitioners should reach an agreed view in recommending a course of action to parents, or identify where there are areas of disagreement. Differences of opinion need to be made explicit.

- All assessments should seek to provide a multi-faceted view of children and their families. This will assist in articulating the scope and nature of problems identified. It will also help in planning and decision making about their needs.
- The assessment of children and young people from ethnic minorities requires cultural sensitivity. Consideration of the impact of racism on their development and environment is essential.
- Any assessment team should ensure that resource and placement recommendations are based upon thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the range of relevant provisions available. Characteristics of placements can vary through staff changes.
- Assessments should be formally recorded in a corporate report which describes the findings and recommendations of the assessment team as agreed in a meeting of all professionals involved. Parents and children should be made aware of the substance of reports, and have copies, where appropriate.
- There should be agreement about the circumstances which trigger formal assessment in order that it can be mobilised at the most appropriate point. The principle of early intervention should be applied wherever possible. Prevention is better than cure.

> *"Because I had help and felt more settled and I know my carers love me, I felt able to give more time and concentration to my school work. My grades improved."*
>
> (Girl in foster care)

The development of a young people's policy in itself can represent a clear political determination to provide early intervention services. For example, over five years in one authority the numbers of young people admitted to residential schools outwith the authority fell by over 60%. Resources from the residential budget have been relocated in day schools and in mainstream support centres. The key to the success of such a strategy lies in the formation of inter-agency groups in every secondary school and now in an increasing number of primary schools. Regular reporting to committees on the monitoring of outcomes of these provisions is a key element in the dynamic exchange that is required amongst policy makers, practitioners and administrators.

Each service discipline contributing to the assessment process should set appropriate standards and provide guidance, especially for parents and young people, on what may reasonably be expected by service users.

Difficulties in translating principles into practice

It is inevitable that bringing professionals together from different disciplines will mean that different theoretical frameworks, informed by different bodies of knowledge, will have to be reconciled. Hence the focus on training, noted below; a training that needs to include opportunities for professionals to learn about each other's values and roles. McKay's paper in this book deals in greater detail with the importance of inter-agency approaches. As far as assessment is concerned, such approaches mean that arrangements need to be made to ensure that there is a balancing of competing views. Similarly, perceptions of resources need to be shared and matched to assessments of needs. Professionals present in an assessment meeting may also differ in the grade of post they hold and therefore they will vary in the degree of access they might have to decision makers within their respective bureaucracies. It may be more difficult to challenge a doctor's recommendations than a social worker's. Staff from the local authority may refer to 'authority policy' as a guide while doctors may speak of matters of 'soul and conscience'.

Teachers may hesitate to comment on family matters and may use language predominantly descriptive of non-conforming behaviour in class groups, while social workers may expect behaviour

in classrooms to be 'excused' by reference to problems at home. At such moments, it will be as if 'justice' confronts 'welfare', 'control' is opposed to care', 'public interest' predominates over the 'best interests' of the individual.

In these circumstances, sharing insights and perceptions in a multi-agency group of 'what is going on' for an individual pupil may make the educational member of the assessment team feel as if he/she is letting down long suffering colleagues, and perhaps feel open to criticism by the head teacher.

At another level, there will be a tension, perhaps insufficiently articulated, between managers of services and the practitioners involved 'face to face with families'. Managers may feel a strong and heightened sense of 'them and us', especially in circumstances of diminishing resources, as the field practitioners report, with hand on heart, a continued or even increased demand for provision which is not available. How can integrity of purpose, accountability for client welfare and advocacy of client rights be sustained while, at the same time there is an employee–employer relationship demanding accountability to the budget? Information does not come naked, it is clothed by local frameworks of opinion and feeling.

Just as there will be a tendency to divert attention from these real dilemmas and difficulties by appeal to ethical issues, such as confidentiality, or to statutory issues, such as 'the law', so there will be required an often unexamined set of skills which are necessary for productive outcomes to multi-disciplinary meetings. Interdisciplinary work needs to be managed. Discussion is required about how this is to be achieved:

- Who chairs the meeting?
- Who writes the report?
- Who takes the minutes?
- Who 'owns' the report?

All these questions have to be addressed and families need to be at the heart of these endeavours, not professional politics.

Focus on training

Training for interdisciplinary assessment should be based on the needs of children and young people rather than on the aspirations and interests of the professions involved. The priorities should be:

- to promote among professionals a common understanding of the development of children and adolescents in the context of their families and of the wider social environment;
- to provide opportunities for professionals to learn about each other's roles and values;
- to deepen and sharpen, through contact with other professionals, the individual's appreciation of his/her own professional skills, and his/her ability to apply these skills.

Where do we go from here?

Planning ahead for a fully articulated assessment service will require an operational structure responsive as far as possible to local needs and provisions.

A fully articulated system will require the identification of a manager for a particular local area who will have responsibility for:

- receiving requests for multidisciplinary assessment from children's hearings and from other sources of referral;
- ensuring that multidisciplinary assessment is carried out involving all practitioners concerned with the child and family, plus additional specialist professionals/resources where appropriate;
- making arrangements for any specialist work indicated;
- arranging for an 'external' chairperson for especially complex cases or where there are conflicts of opinion among the practitioners;
- receiving collated assessment reports, in consultation with parents, and transmitting them to the relevant decision making body after liaising with colleagues in other departments;

- liaising with colleagues to ensure access to appropriate resources following decision making;
- ensuring that assessments are reviewed as necessary.

A priority should be the identification of particular aspects of pre-qualifying and in-service training which can be carried out on an inter-agency basis. This must be a key for future development.

Furthermore, while elements of good practice in the field of inter-agency assessment at practitioner level are evident in many parts of Scotland, inter-agency collaboration at political and departmental levels remains, for most, an unexplored challenge in the best interests of children.

Learning and teaching

Brenda Frier

Effective learning and teaching result from the synthesis of many factors: clear policies which are proactive rather than reactive; a programme of staff development to ensure that policies are understood by those who will be required to implement them; appropriate identification and assessment procedures; flexibility and imagination in curriculum planning and delivery; and collaboration with a range of professionals and parents to support the process.

While these factors are the same for all learners, pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties present a particular challenge to concerned professionals. How might the concept of 'entitlement' be translated into effective classroom practice in relation these learners? This is the key question which must be considered and the delivery of an inclusive curriculum, through appropriate and effective teaching and learning approaches, is the only way in which it may be fully addressed.

This paper discusses the complex nature of the difficulties in learning experienced by pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural problems, and highlights some fundamental principles of classroom practice. It then makes suggestions as to how these principles may be put into practice, and concludes with a consideration of some of the implications for future practice.

Potential barriers to learning

Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are affected by a range of factors — both internal and external — which may hamper their learning potential and progress in school. It could be argued that some children come to school with problems, and schools have problems with some children and young people. The challenge for professionals lies in finding ways of motivating pupils and identifying strategies which will enable them to make progress. This can only be done through knowledge of the pupils and their particular needs using detailed identification and assessment procedures, as Forrest argues in his chapter in this book.

It is important, at all stages, for the class teacher to identify strengths in the individual and build on these, using them to provide opportunities for success within the curriculum.

Social, emotional and behavioural problems manifest themselves in a variety of ways. They may be acted out and apparent, resulting in bizarre or anti-social behaviour in pupils. Conversely, they may be implicit, pupils being withdrawn, and employing avoidance or refusal tactics in class. Almost certainly these young people will require personal space and time, and often, due to past negative educational experiences, they can feel uncomfortable in traditional settings, not trusting adults in authority.

It is important to recognise that each pupil is an individual. Attempts to generalise about pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties run the risk of stereotyping. This can reinforce a tendency to blame pupils for their difficulties. A more constructive approach is one which recognises the complexities of the causes of such difficulties and points to positive strategies for intervention.

The interplay of a complex range of internal and external factors may produce a number of barriers to learning. These barriers may be short term in nature and easily overcome, or they may be more complex, deep seated and long term. In relation to the learning and teaching process they may include:

- gaps in attainment due to previous poor attendance;
- interrupted educational experience due to residential placements;
- outbursts of problematic behaviour which affect the learning of the whole group;
- lack of flexibility in the learning approach of the pupil;
- lack of flexibility in the teaching styles employed;

- poor attitude to learning based on previous negative experience or failure;
- adverse home and social experiences which carry over into school.

These barriers to learning can lead to non-involvement in the learning process, due to a mismatch between the factors affecting a pupil's personal characteristics and the demands which the school places on the individual. Effective teaching and learning is part of a cyclical process which must begin with a thorough assessment of the pupil in order to identify his/her learning needs.

There is, however, a danger that identification and assessment may lead to nothing other than a more attractive deficit model of pupils, rather than seeing the existence of difficulties as an indicator of the need for curriculum reform. It must therefore be stressed that what we are aiming to achieve through detailed initial assessment is as complete a picture as possible of the whole child — the strengths as well as the weaknesses. Unless we have this information we cannot plan effectively for the future. If there are gaps in the information, we may introduce some element into the learning process which will hinder, rather than promote, success.

> *"Well the school think as I am in care I am a troublemaker and I will not work, but it is not true."*
>
> (15 year old)

We are not assessing in order to label pupils and cite the problems as belonging to them. Rather, we are assessing in order to identify the achievement profile, and the areas of difficulty, because it is our responsibility to ensure that the curriculum both responds to and is matched to the needs of the individual pupil — no matter what those needs may be. This is the challenge for the classroom practitioner.

Principles into practice

Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties present major challenges to teachers and, in beginning to plan the teaching and learning experiences, certain key principles must be adhered to.

Entitlement

The notion of entitlement of the pupil to a relevant and appropriate curriculum must be addressed, and made congruent with the needs of the class as a whole. Teachers need to plan so that the range of individual differences within the class will be taken into account, including those of pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Within the 5–14 curriculum this difficult task may be approached through individualisation of programmes, allowing pupils to find an appropriate pathway through the targets and strands, using differentiation as the key strategy. This should not be viewed as creating an alternative curriculum, but rather, as a means of addressing individual needs within a common curricular framework.

Flexibility

As flexibility of response is a key factor in the successful management of learning for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, coordinated approaches to teamwork are critical. Roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined for all participants. Time for joint planning and evaluation of the success of collaborative approaches is important.

Personal and social development

One of the characteristics of pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is that they may have low feelings of self-worth and poor interpersonal skills. The importance of personal and social development therefore cannot be overstated, and a high profile must be given to teaching and learning approaches which seek to enhance self-esteem and develop interpersonal skills. These are the keys by which the learner unlocks the formal curriculum and they cannot be left to chance through a permeation model alone. Opportunities must be

built into teaching and learning to enable learners to acquire and develop these skills. Indeed, the crucial role of personal and social education for all pupils is gradually being recognised. It is an important function of schooling in its own right as well as having implications for pupils' academic progress.

Resources

Provision of resources is another key area to be considered in developing programmes for pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Specialised resources and equipment will not necessarily change behaviour, or influence a disaffected pupil to become more involved in the learning process. However, the imaginative, effective and integrated use of the wide range of existing resources available may help to bring about the desired effect. Much will depend on the skills of the individual teacher.

Parents

The involvement of parents in the learning process is important. Most parents want their children to do well at school. Some parents, however, can lack confidence and understanding of how best to help their children. A familiar comment from teachers is that they never see the parents they want to. Schools need to ask themselves why this is and to examine the nature of their communication with parents. Some schools which have done so, have discovered that they only communicated bad news and problems to parents. A letter from the headteacher always meant trouble and the implication was that parents alone had to do something in a situation which was not amenable to easy answers. Valuing home–school partnership needs to be more than rhetoric and a range of good practice is now emerging.

Pupil empowerment

Finally, pupil empowerment is a key concept to be addressed through teaching and learning. Involving pupils in the planning process and helping them take some responsibility for their own learning creates an ethos where the learners feel their opinions are valued and encourages them to make appropriate choices and take risks. They should be able to answer positively these questions about the curriculum:

- Is it relevant to me?
- Is it worth learning?
- Is it useful to me?

A clear consensus is emerging from research on effective teaching. Effective teachers of children with special needs in mainstream schools are those who:

- emphasise the importance of understanding;
- set tasks that are realistic and challenging;
- ensure that there is progression in children's work;
- provide a variety of learning experiences;
- give pupils opportunities to choose;
- have high expectations;
- create a positive atmosphere;
- provide a consistent approach;
- recognise the efforts and achievements of their pupils;
- organise resources to facilitate learning;
- encourage pupils to work cooperatively;
- monitor progress and provide regular feedback.

More information about these approaches is given in the article by Ainscow (see Further reading).

It goes almost without saying that teachers' classroom practice in the terms outlined above, is enhanced by a supportive school management and above all by an ethos which values *all* children as members of the school community.

Where do we go from here?

In contemplating the way forward there are certain important issues to be considered. If we believe in an entitlement curriculum, that is, that the goals of education are the same for all children, can radically different content and methodologies be acceptable? There is a need, at national level, for guidelines in the delivery of the curriculum through 'pathways' for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties linked into existing performance indicators. This might be achieved through a series of national pilots or initiatives, supported by the Scottish Office, whereby an integrated package is trialled which develops individualised programmes staffed by a

multi-disciplinary team, involving parents and managed locally with community input. A network should also be established to disseminate the information arising from such initiatives. National funding could be bid for by local authorities to promote experimental teaching approaches.

Local authority considerations should include:

- the development of nursery education, which may have the spin-off effect in prevention and monitoring for child abuse;
- resources made available to primary schools for pastoral care to promote early intervention;
- recognition of the need for a flexible curriculum, especially at secondary level;
- the promotion of an ethos which values children and their views;
- recognition of a need for preventative/non-statutory initiatives;
- meaningful involvement of parents and carers.

Much is already being done in some of these areas but much remains to be done. Local authorities could encourage and reward the resourcefulness of schools which are working positively with pupils presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and thereby promoting a positive ethos which recognises the differing needs and abilities of pupils. Local networks of such schools could have positive benefits for the whole service and could be the basis for local staff development opportunities.

This can further be supported by policies which make explicit the concept of entitlement of children and young people to an appropriate mainstream curriculum.

Schools should ensure that they are developing whole school policies which are understood by all who are required to implement them. This ought to promote a shared responsibility in devising appropriate curricula tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and employing a flexible range of teaching approaches.

Schools are developing new approaches involving parents in the process of learning by building on existing good practice. One way of doing so is by involving parents in the life of schools through community education approaches. Scotland is unique in Europe in the extent to which it attracts adults to day time classes in schools. Could such developments be extended through strategies such as providing a room for parents to meet, promoting informal help in the classrooms, and encouraging parental participation in school projects on, for example, the environment or other social issues? Such approaches send signals that the school is interested in involving parents in its work.

> *Teachers were more lenient, no work was expected of me. This treatment was in no way suggesting I was no longer good enough.*
>
> (20 year old, on being in care)

Schools already understand the necessity for flexibility throughout the curriculum. Balance, breadth and progression within 5–14 does not necessarily mean that a pupil has to sit seven or eight Standard grade examinations. The Support for Learning materials for the 5–14 curriculum back this view and encourage schools to be alert to the rights and needs of pupils, reinforcing the notion of an entitlement curriculum.

Finally, there has to be a recognition of the good practice which arises from areas of the curriculum not normally regarded as academic. This is important for all pupils — not only those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Personal and social development has been a rather under-recognised function of schooling and we need to recognise and value endeavour and achievements in this area as well as in the academic curriculum.

Staff development

Alan McLean

This paper discusses how staff development can help schools to meet the social and emotional needs of pupils. Recent progress in knowledge and training in key areas, such as counselling, behaviour management and child protection can support schools to understand better and manage children's behaviour more effectively.

A proactive whole school focus is suggested rather than one which specifically targets children with acute social and emotional needs. The main causes of children's difficulties have traditionally been thought to relate exclusively to child or family factors and the school itself has not been regarded as having any significant influence over or responsibility for children's behaviour. Research in the last 20 years, however, has indicated that schools can have a major positive influence upon children's emotional adjustment and behaviour.

Why this is a priority area for staff development

There are six reasons for highlighting the urgency for staff development in this area.

- *To develop understanding of school and classroom processes*

A major challenge facing schools is how to integrate their discipline systems within a more proactive behaviour management approach which accommodates both care and control issues and balances individual welfare principles with the needs of the whole school. The traditional child deficit approach to pupil management focused on pupil personality and background and so underestimated the importance of teacher style and the curriculum on offer. Effective pupil management involves continual decision making which takes into account a complex array of classroom and school influences. Prescriptive and specific advice to teachers concerning individual children will always therefore be of limited value. A more effective approach is to develop teacher understanding of school and classroom processes. Schools need to resist the increasing pressure to find the 'quick fix' for individual problems and instead develop through staff development a more strategic and analytical perspective.

- *To enhance teachers' readiness to foster personal and social education*

The social and emotional development of pupils is the responsibility of all members of school staff. Recent opportunities for parents to influence the educational agenda have led to a greater emphasis on the personal and social development of pupils. After all, the priority for most parents is for their children at school to be happy, to get on with others and to do their best academically. As awareness of the importance of personal and social education increases so does the need for staff development to enhance teachers' readiness to foster this curriculum area.

- *To develop management styles to complement new roles*

Changes in classroom methods have led to a change in the role of the teacher and new management styles need to be developed to complement the new facilitator role. Greater accountability and openness and more demanding parents have all led to the need for a more sophisticated teaching profession. Societal changes, for example, have led to teacher authority no longer being automatic. Authority and status now need to be negotiated and earned.

- *To share teachers' extensive knowledge and experience*

In relation to pupil management, teachers have traditionally been restricted in their ability to share their extensive knowledge and experience. Reasons for this include false assumptions about teaching being an intuitive skill and a natural gift solely reliant upon

the 'right' personality. The traditional autonomy of teachers and their classroom isolation have been further barriers to communication. Much of the knowledge of successful teaching has been tacit and not easily put into words. Thus the skills of dealing with pupil behaviour have often remained unspoken and unshared. Research findings have been considered irrelevant or impractical and have rarely found their way into schools. Some research ignored the tacit knowledge of teachers and used instead the language and ideas of psychology. Teachers, however, have tended to reject these psychological formulations and the lack of a conceptually refined language has further restricted communication within the teaching profession.

Recent school and classroom effectiveness research has improved this situation considerably by illuminating how successful teachers manage their classrooms. This systematic, common sense approach provides a coherent conceptualisation of skills around which teachers can analyse and develop practice. New staff development programmes have blended this research evidence with the most important resource — the collective experience and expertise of participants. This approach reinforces the growing trend among teachers to work together to manage their problems.

> *"If people know [I am in care] I am called 'charity scrounger', also if a teacher knows they treat me differently, sympathising, asking how I am."*
>
> (15 year old)

- *To consider the informal curriculum and whole school ethos*

Continual reform of the formal curriculum appears to have made little impact on pupil behaviour and has overshadowed the importance of the informal curriculum. Concern with both aspects of school life is essential to achieve the most beneficial results. As pupil progress in the curriculum is greatly affected by their ability to remain on task and cooperate with their classmates, meeting their social and emotional needs must be seen as a prerequisite for the formal curriculum. The informal curriculum and whole school ethos must be central considerations in any staff development programme.

- *To meet the growing expectation on schools to deal with pupils' emotional needs*

As awareness of pupil distress from experiences, such as child abuse and bullying, increases so does the expectation on schools to deal with pupils' emotional needs. Recent interest in bullying and child abuse has acted as a catalyst for a critical review of the culture of our schools. The problem of what to do about bullying presents a unique challenge for schools as any response which reinforces the idea that power is what matters, that force is an acceptable 'quick fix', seems inappropriate. Punishment says to the bully – you used your power over a pupil to hurt him/her and I am going to use my power over you to punish (hurt) you. Indeed some would argue this model of teacher–pupil interaction has contributed to a bullying culture in our schools.

More positive preventive approaches are needed, together with resolution strategies which make children responsible for their own behaviour. Training strategies have been developed over the last few years which focus on encouraging a collective approach to problem solving via a whole class and whole school approach. They tackle the problems of disruptive behaviour and bullying where they occur, that is in the context of the peer group and teacher–pupil relationships. They focus upon how the behaviour of adults affects the behaviour of children.

Principles of effective staff development

To initiate change effectively staff development must:

- involve participants in identifying what and how they will learn;
- focus on specific issues of concern to participants (although part of the process can be raising their concern about a particular issue);
- be directly applicable to practice;
- be interactive and participative to enable a collective and reflective approach, including an exploration of personal values;
- enable the sharing of existing and new knowledge;
- create a non-threatening climate to facilitate creativity while challenging existing practice and personal values;
- allow participants to organise ideas in ways which are meaningful to them and to derive their own conclusions;
- encourage transfer of skills to practice over time.

To maintain change any programme must be:

- empowering rather than deskilling;
- followed up by coaching in context to consolidate new skills through observation, feedback and joint problem solving.

Principles into practice

Models of skills dissemination in this field have moved through various stages over recent years:

1. The expert model

Skills are developed by special teaching staff in segregated specialist schools or units who then pass them on to mainstream education. The dissemination of these skills has not happened to any great extent for a number of reasons. The small number of units are isolated from the mainstream system and no structures have been established to encourage such dissemination. Unit staff do not always enjoy the necessary status and do not share a common language or set of values with their mainstream colleagues. Most importantly, the skills are situation specific and not readily transferable to mainstream schools.

2. The case based model

Psychologists and support teachers pass on skills through casework. This strategy has lacked impact because of the limited coverage by these specialists. In addition, practice does not readily generalise beyond individual cases.

3. The course based model

While external courses have been useful in helping teachers reflect on practice and increase their knowledge, they have often proved to be too theoretical and lacking in practical application. In addition they have tended to be provider led and consequently failed to reflect school needs. Perhaps the greatest limitation with this model is the difficulty encountered by individual teachers in effecting new ideas without support on return to their schools from what has been described as the 'cultural island of in-service'.

4. The school based model

This model allows schools to identify and meet their own needs both from within their own staff expertise and from outside agencies. In this way ownership is transferred from providers to participants.

This model allows course content to be discussed in advance when objectives can be negotiated and based on a needs identification process through, for example, structured interviews or questionnaires. Thereafter, course content and objectives can be clearly communicated in advance. Training will be more likely to be grounded in practice, embedded in the school context, and to start from what is happening in the classroom. It will support and build on initiatives and use positive leaders from staff, thus encouraging ownership by class teachers. Whole school cross-departmental approaches, including non-teaching staff, where everyone's contribution is valued will be particularly effective.

Such an approach has a number of advantages:

- programmes will be more likely to have clearly stated motives, indicated by expectations com-

municated in advance, with an explicit and agreed set of aims and objectives;
- there will be a defined end-point and predetermined measures of success to allow evaluation;
- input from outside agencies can be used jointly with classroom practitioners for credibility and to enable practical in-class demonstrations.

The way forward

Staff development must be about how teachers can provide mutual support and share their ideas and expertise. It must ask participants to analyse their own policies and practices, using a rational set of principles, and lead to action. There is a tendency to expect packaged solutions from experts, but such a search leads only to grasping at straws. Energy and positive attitudes can replace frustration and disillusion only if a positive approach is adopted in which teachers perceive meeting pupils' social and emotional needs as an area in which everyone has something to learn and something to give.

> *"Getting hit all the time, I could not spend much time in school."*
>
> (17 year old)

Looking ahead to the new local government structures, major questions will need to be addressed. For example:
- What structures and mechanisms will enable joint training with other agencies to allow an exchange of ideas concerning skills, roles, responsibilities, values, resources, and legislative frameworks? Perhaps the most fruitful opportunities will be through specific task focused work dealing with common issues such as child protection and bullying.
- What is the potential for recent innovations in staff development, such as accreditation, modular courses, and open learning to improve training in this area ?
- How can parents and pupils be involved by schools in the staff development process ?
- How will schools be motivated to give priority to this issue?
- Which agencies will provide the essential external perspectives to schools and how will schools access these agencies?

Conclusions

The school based model advocated here places great responsibility on school management. To maximise the benefits from staff development each programme must be:
- organised within a long term coherent development plan, set within the overall policy framework;
- supported and valued by management; and
- provided with a mechanism for conveying outcomes about aspects of practice and policy to management.

There is clearly a need for authorities to retain some form of strategic overview of training which can give due priority to this important area. Such a strategy would facilitate the development of networks to enable exchange of tested practice. Staff development can offer the mechanism whereby schools learn the lessons from innovative pilot projects and thus avoid the *ad hoc* nature of developments in this field. Ownership of the strategy must be multi-agency in terms of planning, needs identification, and delivering training. Such a strategic overview will become increasingly important if schools become more independent of local authorities and isolated from each other.

Where next?

In taking forward the many sound and challenging ideas which are being discussed, it is important to ensure that they are not viewed as a separate agenda from the current challenges in mainstream education, social work and youth and community services. Nor should they be perceived as an artificial 'bolt-on'.

There is evidence to confirm that the issues raised here must both inform and challenge key mainstream developments for Scotland's children and young people. These issues should be integral to the debates about and challenges relating to the provision of high quality education, social and community service.

Effective provision for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, provision which embodies the principles cited in this book, is difficult to achieve. Yet the issues raised are central to learning and teaching, the interests of young people, the ongoing work of committed staff, the concerns of all parents and the diverse interests of the wider community.

Further reading

References to the research and other literature were deliberately kept to a minimum in the text. The following are suggested as starting points for those interested in pursuing further some of the issues raised in the various chapters:

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Effective provision for children and young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is an issue of national importance. A major concern is the development of a system of support which seeks to maintain children at home and in their local schools. This booklet identifies principles of good practice underlying such a system and raises issues for discussion and debate.

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